

# THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

## NOTES ON THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOR APRIL 12.

### The Resurrection.

1 Corinthians 15: 20, 21, 5-58.

Golden Text. Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. 1 Corinthians 15: 20.

For the Easter lesson this year, our thoughts are turned appropriately to what was probably the first written account of the Resurrection. This is contained in Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, which was written from Ephesus toward the end of his three years' stay in that city.

The Resurrection Chapter.—The First Epistle to the Corinthians is distinguished by the variety of the subjects which it discusses and by the importance of the truths and doctrines which it sets forth.

The most famous chapter in this Epistle is the fifteenth chapter, which has been fitly named "the Resurrection chapter." The Scripture portion assigned for our lesson includes only a part of this magnificent chapter, but it is to be hoped that the older classes, at least, will read and study the entire chapter.

It should be noted in the analysis of this chapter that Paul first establishes the truth of the Resurrection of Christ, both from the testimony of eye-witnesses who had testified to the fact of having seen the risen Christ before His ascension into heaven, and from his own experience upon the road to Damascus, when, with his own eyes, he had seen the risen. Then Paul proceeds to show that the Resurrection of Christ is the foundation stone of the whole Christian faith, and that without it the redemption of the human race would be an impossibility. Next he discusses the manner of the resurrection of believers in Christ, and finally he draws from the whole subject some eminently practical lessons for the daily life of the disciple of Christ.

Christ the First Fruits.—The beautiful simile by which Christ is called "the first fruits" of them that have fallen asleep is based on the fact that "the first ripe grain (Leviticus 23:10-14) was offered to God as a symbol of the coming harvest, on the day after the Passover Sabbath, the day of Christ's Resurrection." As this Epistle to the Corinthians was written about the time of Easter, the figure here used had a special appropriateness and a direct application which would be at once apparent to every Jewish Christian.

"The Glory and Joy of the Resurrection."—In the closing verses of this splendid chapter Paul rises into a most eloquent and impassioned outburst. Here he soars into the loftiest realms of eternal song and triumphant praise. "He sees," writes Dr. James Patton in his inspiring book entitled "The Glory and Joy of the Resurrection," "for all genuine believers in Jesus Christ, that

death itself is dethroned and destroyed; not only by the taking away of sin out of the soul, and thereby depriving death of its sting, but also by raising up an incorruptible body out of the corruptible flesh and blood, and thereby robbing the grave of its 'victory.' Yea, as he gazes with glowing eyes upon the corruptible putting on incorruption, and the mortal putting on immortality, he pours his ravishment into the channel grooved for him of old by the prophetic cry: 'The Lord God hath swallowed up Death for ever' (Isaiah 25:8). And then he rolls this blessed and precious idea over and over within his soul, singing above the rifled tomb, and through the realms of emptied Hades: 'O Death, where is thy sting?'

The Practical Conclusion.—As the fitting conclusion to his magnificent argument concerning the reality and power of the Resurrection, Paul draws a practical lesson for the every-day conduct of the Christian believer in these words: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." In other words, the dynamic of Christian living is to be found in the thought of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

### "Just Glad Plum' Through."

God must love a pleasant, happy face, for He made men and women love such faces so greatly. And a scowl must be a abomination to Him. When unpleasant feelings within have drawn unpleasant lines without, have we not felt the Spirit of God trying to smooth out the countenance, even as a mother runs her hand over the pouting lips of her child, and says they are pretty? Surely the love of God would be even quicker to wipe away every frown from the brow than it is to wipe away every tear from the eyes. For the frown hurts us more, and hurts others more, too. But peace within, shining through pleasantness without, is indeed an offering of a sweet savor unto God. James Whitcomb Riley got at the truth of the matter, though in homely phrase, when he wrote:

"As it's give me to perceive I most certainly believe,  
When a man's just glad, plum'  
through, God's pleased with him  
the same as you."

—Sunday-School Times.

God no more hands the bread of life ready-made than He hands the material bread ready-made. You must knead your own dough, bake your own bread, make your own garments, contribute your own service, do your own share of work, if you would get the benefit of any of God's good gifts.—Lyman Abbott.

Wilson Times: The tobacco plants, our farmers say, are plentiful, and two weeks earlier than usual, and are growing so rapidly they will push the farmers to set them out.

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